

**CLAIMS**

- 1 1. A method of communicating with a user of a processor-based device over a network, the  
2 method comprising:  
3 providing a body-less electronic mail message having a subject line;  
4 receiving a text message into the subject line of the body-less electronic mail  
5 message; and  
6 transmitting the body-less electronic mail message to the user over the network.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the subject line of the body-less electronic mail message  
2 includes one or more other text messages taken from a subject line of a previous body-  
3 less electronic mail message.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the subject line of the body-less electronic mail message  
2 includes one or more other text messages taken from a chat conversation converted into a  
3 format of a body-less electronic mail message.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving the body-less electronic mail  
2 message over the network, displaying the body-less electronic mail message on a display  
3 screen as a line item in a mailbox view, and displaying on the display screen an entire  
4 contents of the subject line when a cursor is positioned over a subject column of the line  
5 item.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving the body-less electronic mail  
2 message over the network, displaying the body-less electronic mail message on a display  
3 screen as a line item in a mailbox view having a column for the subject line, and

4 displaying on the display screen a scroll bar arrow at one end of the subject line column,  
5 when a cursor is positioned over the subject column of the line item, for horizontally  
6 scrolling through the contents of the subject line.

1 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising inserting a delimiter into the subject line to  
2 separate the text message from a previous text message currently included in the subject  
3 line.

1 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising converting the body-less electronic mail  
2 message to an online electronic chat conversation.

1 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising converting a chat conversion into a body-less  
2 electronic mail message.

1 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying on a user interface a chat-like  
2 graphical window for engaging in synchronous chat in response to receiving the body-  
3 less electronic mail message over the network.

1 10. A computing system, comprising:

2 a display screen;

3 an input device;

4 a network interface; and

5 a processor running an electronic mail program to present to a user on the display  
6 screen a body-less electronic mail message having a subject line, wherein the user  
7 operates the input device to enter a text message into the subject line of the body-less

8 electronic mail message, and the network interface transmits the body-less electronic mail  
9 message having the text message in the subject line over a network.

1 11. The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail program places in the  
2 subject line of the body-less electronic mail message one or more other text messages  
3 taken from a subject line of a previously received body-less electronic mail message.

1 12. The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail program displays the  
2 body-less electronic mail message on a display screen as a line item in a mailbox view  
3 and displays an entire contents of the subject line when a cursor is positioned over a  
4 subject column of the line item.

1 13. The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail program displays the  
2 body-less electronic mail message on a display screen as a line item in a mailbox view  
3 and displays a scroll bar arrow at one end of the subject line column, when a cursor is  
4 positioned over the subject column of the line item, for horizontally scrolling through the  
5 contents of the subject line.

1 14. The computing system of claim 10, wherein the electronic mail program converts the  
2 body-less electronic mail message to an online electronic chat conversation.

1 15. The computing system of claim 10, wherein the chat program converts a chat conversion  
2 into a body-less electronic mail message.

1 16. The computing system of claim 10, wherein the network interface communicates with the  
2 network over one of a wired and wireless connection.

- 1 17. The computing system of claim 10, wherein the computing system is one of a computer,  
2 a workstation, a personal digital assistant, a cellular telephone, and an online gaming  
3 platform.
- 1 18. An apparatus for communicating with a user of a processor-based device over a network,  
2 the apparatus comprising:  
3 means for providing a body-less electronic mail message having a header;  
4 means for recording a temporal sequence of one or more text messages into the  
5 header of the body-less electronic mail message; and  
6 means for transmitting the body-less electronic mail message to the user over the  
7 network.
- 1 19. The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for displaying the body-less  
2 electronic mail message as a line item in a mailbox view and for displaying the entire  
3 temporal sequence of one or more text messages while in the mailbox view.
- 1 20. The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for displaying the body-less  
2 electronic mail message as a line item in a mailbox view and for horizontally scrolling  
3 through the sequence of one or more text messages while in the mailbox view.
- 1 21. The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for converting the body-less  
2 electronic mail message to an online electronic chat conversation.
- 1 22. The apparatus of claim 18, further comprising means for converting a chat conversation  
2 into a body-less electronic mail message.

- 1   23.    A computer program product for use with a computer system, the computer program  
2           product comprising a computer useable medium having embodied therein program code  
3           comprising:  
4                 program code for providing a body-less electronic mail message having a header;  
5                 program code for recording a temporal sequence of one or more text messages  
6           into the header of the body-less electronic mail message; and  
7                 program code for transmitting the body-less electronic mail message to the user  
8           over the network.
- 1   24.    The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising program code for  
2           displaying the body-less electronic mail message as a line item in a mailbox view and for  
3           displaying the entire temporal sequence of one or more text messages while in the  
4           mailbox view.
- 1   25.    The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising program code for  
2           displaying the body-less electronic mail message as a line item in a mailbox view and for  
3           horizontally scrolling through the sequence of one or more text messages while in the  
4           mailbox view.
- 1   26.    The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising program code for  
2           converting the body-less electronic mail message to an online electronic chat  
3           conversation.
- 1   27.    The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising program code for  
2           converting a chat conversation into a body-less electronic mail message.

- 1 28. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave for use with a computer system  
2 having a display and capable of generating a user interface through which a user may  
3 interact with the computer system, the computer data signal comprising:  
4 program code for providing a body-less electronic mail message having a header;  
5 program code for recording a temporal sequence of one or more text messages  
6 into the header of the body-less electronic mail message; and  
7 program code for transmitting the body-less electronic mail message to the user  
8 over the network.
- 1 29. The apparatus of claim 28, further comprising program code for displaying the body-less  
2 electronic mail message as a line item in a mailbox view and for displaying the entire  
3 temporal sequence of one or more text messages while in the mailbox view.
- 1 30. The apparatus of claim 28, further comprising program code for displaying the body-less  
2 electronic mail message as a line item in a mailbox view and for horizontally scrolling  
3 through the sequence of one or more text messages while in the mailbox view.
- 1 31. The apparatus of claim 28, further comprising program code for converting the body-less  
2 electronic mail message to an online electronic chat conversation.
- 1 32. The apparatus of claim 28, further comprising program code for converting a chat  
2 conversation into a body-less electronic mail message.